

REMARKS

Claims 1-40 remain pending and at issue in this application. In particular, claims 11-18 have been indicated to be allowable, claims 1, 2, 4-8, 11, 14, 17-20, 23-26, 29, 30, 32 and 37-40 have been amended, and no new claims have been added.

I. REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §112

Responsive to the rejection of claims 1-10 and 19-40 as indefinite for lacking clear antecedent basis for the phrase "determining the quality", applicants have amended independent claims 1, 19 and 30 to recite, in relevant part, "determining a quality". Applicants have further amended claims 1, 2, 4-8, 11, 14, 17-20, 23-26, 29, 30, 32 and 37-40 to correct other noted antecedent basis issues and provide consistency of terminology. Applicants submit that no new matter has been added by these amendments. Applicants have made a good faith attempt to correct all of the antecedent basis issues detected in the claims. However, should additional antecedent basis issues be detected, the examiner is requested to contact the applicants' attorney at the number listed below in order to address these additional issues. In any event, based on these amendments, applicants respectfully submit that the indefiniteness rejections of claims 1-10 and 19-40 have been rendered moot because these claims now possess the required antecedent basis. Thus, applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the pending rejections of claims 1-10 and 19-40, and allowance of claims 1-40.

II. APPLICANTS' INTERVIEW SUMMARY

Applicants' attorney, Roger A. Heppermann, contacted Examiner Geckil on or about October 2, 2004 to discuss the status of the pending claims 1-40 and the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112. During the course of the teleconference, the scope of the pending antecedent basis issues and other claim terminology were discussed.

Applicants' attorney and Examiner Geckil agreed upon a course of action to address these issues, and the amendments presented above in the "Amendments to the Claims" section reflect the agreed upon course of action. Applicants wish to thank Examiner Geckil for taking the time to discuss this application, and his assistance in moving this case forward to allowance.

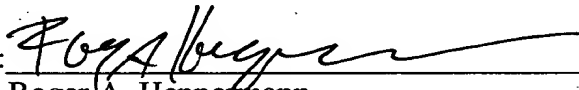
III. CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, applicants submit the application is in condition for allowance. If there are any additional fees or refunds required, the Commissioner is directed to charge or debit Deposit Account No. 13-2855 (29832/36620).

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections is therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted for,

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